

The Book of Psalms

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Psalm 1

תהלים א

¹ BLESSED IS the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful.

אַשְׁרֵי הָאִישׁ-- אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִלֵּךְ, בְּעֵצַת רְשָׁעִים; וּבְדֶרֶךְ חַטָּאִים, לֹא עָמַד, וּבְמוֹשָׁב לְצִים, לֹא יָשָׁב.

- The opening encrypts יִשְׂרָאֵל via the ר, ש, י, and לָא reversed. Whether this is intended, Straussian, or random is left to the reader.
- Acrostically, the psalm's lines similarly read ייהאלי, the last of which Dr. Zinner believes continues in Psalm 2's הוה to form the Tetragrammaton. A point in favor of their simultaneous composition.

² But his delight is in the law of HaShem; and in His law doth he meditate day and night.

כִּי אִם בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה, חִפְצּוֹ; וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה, יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה.

- The first יְהוָה appears 65 letters in, the sum for אֶלֶף.

³ And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, and whose leaf doth not wither; and in whatsoever he doeth he shall prosper. ⁴ Not so the wicked; but they are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

³ וְהָיָה-- כְּעֵץ, שָׁתוּל עַל-פְּלִיגֵי-מַיִם; אֲשֶׁר פִּרְיוֹ, יִתֵּן בְּעֵתוֹ-- וְעָלָהּ לֹא-יָבוּל; וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲשֶׂה יִצְלִיחַ. ⁴ לֹא-כֵן הָרְשָׁעִים: כִּי אִם-כַּמֶּז, אֲשֶׁר-תִּדְפְּנוּ רוּחַ. ⁵ עַל-כֵּן, לֹא-יִקָּמוּ רְשָׁעִים-- בַּמִּשְׁפָּט; וְחַטָּאִים, בְּעֵדַת צַדִּיקִים.

⁶ For HaShem regardeth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.

כִּי-יִוָּדַע יְהוָה, דֶּרֶךְ צַדִּיקִים; וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים תֵּאבֵד.

- The ך in the final יְהוָה appears 26 letters from the end.

Psalm 2

- Some argue that Psalm 2 succeeds the Maccabean Revolt.

¹ Why are the nations in an uproar? And why do the peoples mutter in vain?
² The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together, against HaShem, and against His anointed:
³ 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.'

¹ לָמָּה, רָגְשׁוּ גּוֹיִם; וּלְאֻמִּים, יִהְיוּ-רִיק. ² יִתְנַצְּבוּ, מְלָכֵי-אֲרָץ-- וְרוֹזְנִים נֹסְדוּ-יַחַד:עַל-יְהוָה, וְעַל-מִשְׁחֹו. ³ נִגְתִּיקָהּ, אֶת-מוֹסְרוֹתֵימֹו; וְנִשְׁלִיכֶה מִמֶּנּוּ עֲבֹתֵימֹו.

⁴ He that sitteth in heaven laugheth, the L-rd hath them in derision.

יֹושֵׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׁחַק: אֲדָנִי, יִלְעָג-לָמוֹ.

- The first אֲדָנִי is 26 words in.

⁵ Then will He speak unto them in His wrath, and affright them in His sore displeasure:
⁶ 'Truly it is I that have established My king upon Zion, My holy mountain.'
⁷ I will tell of the decree: HaShem said unto me: 'Thou art My son, this day have I begotten thee.
⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give the nations for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession.
⁹ Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'
¹⁰ Now therefore, O ye kings, be wise; be admonished, ye judges of the earth.

⁵ אִזּוּ יְדַבֵּר אֱלִימֹו בְּאַפּוֹ; וּבְחֶרֶוֹנוּ יִבְהֶלְמוּ. ⁶ וְאֲנִי, נִסְכַּתִּי מְלָכִי:עַל-צִיּוֹן, הֶר-קִדְשִׁי. ⁷ אֲסַפְּרָה, אֶל-חֵק: יְהוָה, אֲמַר אֵלַי בְּנִי אַתָּה--אֲנִי, הַיּוֹם יִקְדָּתִיד. ⁸ שְׁאֵל מִמֶּנִּי--וְאֶתַנֶּה גּוֹיִם, נַחֲלֶתְךָ; וְנֶאֱחָזְתֶךָ, אִפְסִי-אֲרִץ. ⁹ תִּרְעָם, בְּשֹׁבֵט בָּרָזָל: כִּכְלִי יִצָּר תִּנְפָצֻם. ¹⁰ וְעַתָּה, מְלָכִים הַשְׁכִּילוּ; הַיָּסְרוּ, שִׁפְטִי אֲרִץ.

¹¹ Serve HaShem with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

עֲבֹדוּ אֶת-יְהוָה בְּיִרְאָה; וּגְדִילוּ, בְּרַעְדָּה.

- The ך in the final יְהוָה appears 65 letters from the end.

¹² Do homage in purity, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way, when suddenly His wrath is kindled. Happy are all they that take refuge in Him.

¹² נִשְׁקֹו-בָר, שֹׁן-יֶאֱנָף וְתֹאבְדוּ דָרָךְ-- כִּי-יִבְעַר כְּמַעַט אַפּוֹ:אֲשֶׁרִי, כָּל-חֹסֵי בוֹ.

Psalm 27

תהלים כז

¹ A Psalm of David. HaShem is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? HaShem is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

¹ לְדָוִד: יְהוָה, אֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי--מִמִּי אֵירָא; יְהוָה מַעֲזוֹ-חַיִּי, מִמִּי אֶפְחָד.

- The Septuagint adds “before he was anointed” to the Davidic pedigree.

Psalm 27:1 LXX – ¹ *A Psalm of David, before he was anointed. The Lord is my light and my Saviour; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the defender of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*

¹ Τοῦ Δαυὶδ, πρὸ τοῦ χρισθῆναι. Κύριος φωτισμός μου καὶ σῴτηρ μου, τίνα φοβηθήσομαι; Κύριος ὑπερασπιστὴς τῆς ζωῆς μου, ἀπὸ τίνος δειλιάσω;

- Midrash Tehillim links Psalm 27 to the high holy days.

Midrash Tehillim 27 – *The rabbis explained this verse as referring to Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. 'my light,' on Rosh Hashanah. 'And my salvation,' on Yom Kippur.*

רבנן פתרי קראי בראש השנה ויום הכפורים. אורי בראש השנה. וישעי ביום הכפורים.

- A beautiful articulation of God as light. Here are some others:

2 Samuel 22:29 – ²⁹ *For Thou art my lamp, O HaShem; and HaShem doth lighten my darkness.*

²⁹ כִּי-אַתָּה יְרִי, יְהוָה; וְיִהְיֶה, יְגִיעַ חֲשִׁכִי.

Quran 24:35 – ³⁵ *Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. This lamp is kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth of itself though no fire touched it. Light upon light. Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories, for Allah is Knower of all things.*

³⁵ اَللّٰهُ نُورٌ اَلْسُمُوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضُ مِثْلُ نُوْرٍ. كَمِشْكُوٰةٍ فِیْهَا مِصْبَاحٌ اَلْمِصْبَاحُ فِی زُجَاجَةٍ اَلْزُجَاجَةُ كَاَنّٰهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرّیُّ یُوْقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُّبَرَكَۃٍ زَیْتُوْنَةٍ لَا شَرْقِیَّةٌ وَلَا غَرْبِیَّةٌ یَكَادُ زَیْتُهَا یُضِیْءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُّوْرٌ عَلٰی نُوْرٍ یَهْدِی اَللّٰهُ لِلنُّوْرِ. مَنْ یَّشَآءْ وَیَضْرِبُ اَللّٰهُ اَلْاَمْتَلِل لِلنَّاسِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَیْءٍ عَلِیْمٌ

Thomas 77 – ⁷⁷ *Jesus said: “I am the light above all. I am the all. The all came forth from me, and the all extended to me. Split a piece of wood, I am there; lift up the stone, and there you will find me.”*

⁷⁷ πεχε ιϛ xe ανοκ πε πογοειν παιε ετιζιχωσγ τηρογ ανοκ πε ιπιτηρῒ ητα ιπιτηρῒ ει εβολ ηζηη αγω ητα ιπιτηρῒ σπαρ σπαρσει σπαρ ημοσγσε ανοκ ιψιμαγ qi ηπομε εεραι αγω τετηαζε εροει ημαγ.

² When evil-doers came upon me to eat up my flesh, even mine adversaries and my foes, they stumbled and fell.

² בִּקְרֹב עָלַי, מְרַעִים-- לֶאֱכֹל אֶת-בָּשָׁרִי: צָרִי וְאֹיְבִי לִי, הֵמָּה כְּשֶׁלּוֹ וְנִפְּלוּ.

- To **[eat my flesh, לֶאֱכֹל אֶת-בָּשָׁרִי]**, an idiom for slander also used in Daniel. These are the false witnesses of verse 12.

Daniel 3:8 – ⁸ *Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and brought accusation against the Jews.*

⁸ כֹּל-קַבְּל דְּנָה בַּהּ-מִנְּאָ, קָרְבוּ גְבָרִין כְּשַׁדְּאִין; וְאִכְלוּ קַרְצִיחֹון, דִּי יְהוּדָא.

Daniel 6:25 – ²⁵ *And the king commanded, and they brought those men that had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and they had not come to the bottom of the den, when the lions had the mastery of them, and broke all their bones in pieces.*

²⁵ וְאִמַר מַלְאָךְ, וַיְהִינּוּ גְבָרָאֵי אֵלֶךְ דִּי-אִכְלוּ קַרְצִיחֵי דִי דְנִיחָל, וּלְגוּב אֲרִיָּותָא רַמֹּו, אֲבוּן בַּגִּיהוֹן וַיִּשְׁחִיחוּ; וְלֹא-מָטוּ לְאַרְעֵי גְבָאֵי, עַד דִּי-שְׁלַטּוּ בַּהוֹן אֲרִיָּותָא, וְקַל-גְּרַמִּיהוֹן, נַהֲקוּ.

- Midrash Tehillim explains it much the same way, equating adversary and accuser.

Midrash Tehillim 27 – *'When evil men assail me,' this refers to the idolaters. 'To devour my flesh,' when they come to accuse Israel and say before the Holy One: these (meaning themselves) are idolaters and those (meaning Israel) are idolaters as well! 'my foes and my enemies,' the numerical value of the letters of hasatan (the accuser) is 364. Every day of the year he has the authority to make accusations, except on Yom Kippur (and Rosh Hashanah).*

בקרוב עלי מרעים אלו אומות העכו"ם. לאכול את בשרי. שהן באין לקטרך את ישראל ואומרים לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא אלו עובדי עבודה זרה ואלו עובדי עבודה זרה. צרי ואויבי לי. את מוצא מנין השט"ן בגמטריא שס"ד. כל ימות השנה יש לו רשות לקטרך חוץ מיום הכפורים (וראש השנה).

- The accuser, the Satan, has no license to prosecute on Yom Kippur, the central light of this Psalm under the rabbinical holiday interpretation.

Yoma 20a – *And what did Satan the prosecutor say about their sinning? Elijah said to him: Satan, on Yom Kippur, has no license to prosecute. From where is that idea derived? Rami bar Hama said: The numerological value of the letters that constitute the word HaSatan is three hundred and sixty four: Heh has a value of five, sin has a value of three hundred, tet has a value of nine, and nun has a value of fifty-five. Three hundred and sixty-four days of the solar year, which is three hundred and sixty-three days long, Satan has license to prosecute. On the remaining day, Yom Kippur, he has no license to prosecute. Since that day is exalted above all others, there is no room for the accusations of Satan.*

ושטן מאי אמר? אמר ליה: שטן ב'וקא דכיפורי — לית ליה רשותא לאסטוני. ממאי? אמר רמי בר חמא: "השטן" בגמטריא תלת מאה ושתין וארבעה הוי. תלת מאה ושתין וארבעה יומי — אית ליה רשותא לאסטוני. ב'וקא דכיפורי — לית ליה רשותא לאסטוני.

³ Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise up against me, even then will I be confident.
⁴ One thing have I asked of HaShem, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of HaShem all the days of my life, to behold the graciousness of HaShem, and to visit early in His temple.
⁵ For He concealth me in His pavilion in the day of evil; He hideth me in the covert of His tent; He lifteth me up upon a rock.

³ אִם-תִּהְיֶה עָלַי, מַחֲנֶה-- לֹא-יִירָא לְבִי: אִם-תִּקְוֶם עָלַי, מִלְחָמָה-- בְּזֹאת, אֲנִי בּוֹשֵׁת. ⁴ אַחַת, שְׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת-יְהוָה-- אֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ: שְׁבַתִּי בְּבֵית-יְהוָה, כָּל-יְמֵי חַיִּי; לַחֲזוֹת בְּנֹעַם יְהוָה, וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכָלוֹ. ⁵ כִּי יִצְפְּנִי, בַּסֶּכֶת-- בַּיּוֹם רָעָה: יִסְתַּרְנִי, בְּסִתְרֵי אֹהֱלוֹ; בַּצּוּר, יְרוּמָמֶנִי.

- A sukkah, a tent, and a rock. Verse 1 gave us Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Here we have Sukkot.

⁶ And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; and I will offer in His tabernacle sacrifices with trumpet-sound; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto HaShem.
⁷ Hear, O HaShem, when I call with my voice, and be gracious unto me, and answer me.
⁸ In Thy behalf my heart hath said: 'Seek ye My face'; Thy face, HaShem, will I seek.

⁶ וְעַתָּה יְרוּם ראשִׁי, עַל אֹיְבֵי כְּבִיבוֹתִי, וְאֶזְכָּר בְּאֹהֶלְךָ, זִכְרִי תְרוּעָה; אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמַרָה, לַיהוָה. ⁷ שְׁמַע-יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא; וְחֲנֹנִי וְעֲנֵנִי. ⁸ לֵךְ, אֲמַר לְבִי--בִּקְשׁוּ פָנֶי; אֶת-פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ.

- One cannot look into the face of HaShem and live. Yet we seek it all the same.

- The grammar here is choppy, suggesting the psalmist is quoting HaShem. The Septuagint attempts to smooth it.

Psalm 27:8 LXX – ⁸ *My heart said to thee, I have diligently sought thy face: thy face, O Lord, I will seek.*

⁸ Σοὶ εἶπεν ἡ καρδία μου, ἐξεζητήσας τὸ πρόσωπόν σου, τὸ πρόσωπόν σου Κύριε ζητήσω.

⁹ Hide not Thy face far from me; put not Thy servant away in anger; Thou hast been my help; cast me not off, neither forsake me, O G-d of my salvation.

⁹ אַל-תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ, מִמֶּנִּי-- אֵל תַּט-בָּאֶף, עֲבָדְךָ: עֲזָרְתִּי חַיִּית; אֶל-תַּטְשֵׁנִי וְאֶל-תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי, אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי.

- Opposite use of **[hide, סתר]**. In verse 5 HaShem **[hides, יִסְתַּרְנִי]** David. Now David asks that God **[not hide, אֶל-תַּסְתֵּר]** Himself.

¹⁰ For though my father and my mother have forsaken me, HaShem will take me up.

¹⁰ כִּי-אֲבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי; וְיְהוָה יֶאֱסָפֵנִי.

- God as parent. The beautiful **Avinu Malcheinu** from liturgy comes to mind.

¹¹ Teach me Thy way, O HaShem; and lead me in an even path, because of them that lie in wait for me.
¹² Deliver me not over unto the will of mine adversaries; for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out violence.

¹¹ הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה, דְּרָכֶךָ; וְנַחֲנֵי, בְּאֶרֶחַ מִישׁוֹר--לְמַעַן, שׁוֹרְרִי. ¹² אַל-תַּחַנְנֵנִי, בְּנִפְצֵי צָרִי: כִּי קִמוּ-בִי עֲדֵי-שָׂקָר, וַיִּפַּח חִמָּם.

- Some connect Proverbs 6:19 “breathe out lies” on the basis of the Ugaritic cognate **[yph, witness]**. On this view “breathe out violence” moreso means “bear false witness.”

Proverbs 6:19 – ¹⁹ *A false witness that breatheth out lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

¹⁹ יִפְיֵחַ קִדְבִים, עַד שָׂקָר; וּמְשַׁלַּח מִדְּנִים, בֵּין אֲחֵים.

¹³ If I had not believed to look upon the goodness of HaShem in the land of the living! —

¹³ לֹו־לֹא--הֶאֱמַנְתִּי, לְרֹאֹת בְּטוֹב יְהוָה: בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים.

- One of 15 “puncta extraordinaria” in the Masoretic text appears here. The word **[לֹו־לֹא, if not]**, appears with extra dots above each letter. In ancient times these “cancellation marks” were often used to indicate a word’s accidental or dubious inclusion. The Gemara attributes these dots to David’s self-doubt.

Berakhot 4a – *With regard to David’s statement, “Keep my soul, for I am pious,” the Gemara asks: Did David call himself pious? Isn’t it written: “If I had not [luleh] believed to look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Psalms 27:13). The dots that appear over the word luleh in the text indicate doubt and uncertainty of his piety, and whether he was deserving of a place in the land of the living (see Avot DeRabbi Natan 34).*

In the name of Rabbi Yosei, it was taught in a Tosefta: Why do dots appear over the word luleh, as if there are some reservations? Because David said before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe. I have every confidence in You that You grant an excellent reward to the righteous in the World-to-Come since God’s ultimate goodness is manifest in the land of eternal life, but I still harbor uncertainty with regard to myself, and I do not know whether or not I definitely have a portion among them.

וְדוּד מִי קָרִי לְנִפְשֵׁהּ "הַסִּיד"? וְהִתְבֵּיב "לוֹלֵא הֶאֱמַנְתִּי לְרֹאֹת בְּטוֹב ה' בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים",

וְתָאבַר מִשְׁמֵיהּ דְּרַבִּי יוֹסִי: לָמָּה נִקְדַּח עַל "לוֹלֵא"? — אָמַר דּוּד לִפְנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: רַבּוּנוּ שָׁל עוֹלָם, מִבְּטָח אֲנִי בְּךָ שְׂאֵמָה שְׁמֶשׁ שָׁקֵר טוֹב לְצַדִּיקִים לְעֻתִּיד לְבוֹא, אָבֵל אֲנִי יוֹדַע אִם יֵשׁ לִי חֵלֶק בְּיַנְיָהֶם אִם לֹא?!

¹⁴ Wait on HaShem; be strong, and let thy heart take courage; yea, wait thou for HaShem.

¹⁴ קְוֵה, אֶל-יְהוָה: חֲזֹק, וַיֵּאֱמִן לְבָבְךָ; וְקַוֵּה, אֶל-יְהוָה.

- The final of 13 Tetragrammatons, one for each of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy read during Elul. Thirteen is also the gematria sum for **[love, אַהֲבָה]** and **[oneness, אֶחָד]**.

Exodus 34:6-7 – ⁶ *And HaShem passed by before him, and proclaimed: 'The HaShem, HaShem, G-d, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;
⁷ keeping mercy unto the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and unto the fourth generation.'*

⁶ וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה עַל-פָּנָיו, וַיִּקְרָא, יְהוָה יְהוָה, אֵל רַחוּם וְרַחוּן--אֲרָךְ אַפַּיִם, וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאֱמֻנָה. ⁷ נֹצַר חֶסֶד לְאֻלָּפִים, נִשְׂא עוֹן וְפָשַׁע וְחַטָּאת, וְנָקָה, לֹא יִנְקֶה--פֶּקֶד עוֹן אֲבוֹתַי עַל-בָּנִים וְעַל-בְּנֵי בָנִים, עַל-שְׁלֹשִׁים וְעַל-רַבְעִים.

Faith Symbols

- Christian✝.
- Dharmic☸.
- Jewish✡.
- Muslim: Shia ۞, Sunni ٢٠.
- Pagan: Apollo☿, Hermes♄.

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